

Y E A R 1 1 A N D 1 2 S T U D E N T S
B O O K L E T

Fast and Easy Way to Exam Success

STUDY SMART GUIDE



PREPARED BY:

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Foreword

This dynamic study program brings together educational and psychological theories on learning and remembering.
The program covers:

- The importance of memory in study
- Exercises that teach how to use both left and right brained study techniques
- Personal learning styles
- Exciting and useful ways to record information
- Ideas on how to keep motivated
- A simple, time efficient, yet powerful tool to study

For parents the program highlights:

- The vital role they have in supporting a Year 11/12 student
- Practical ways parents can encourage a positive study habit & supportive environment.

May 2011



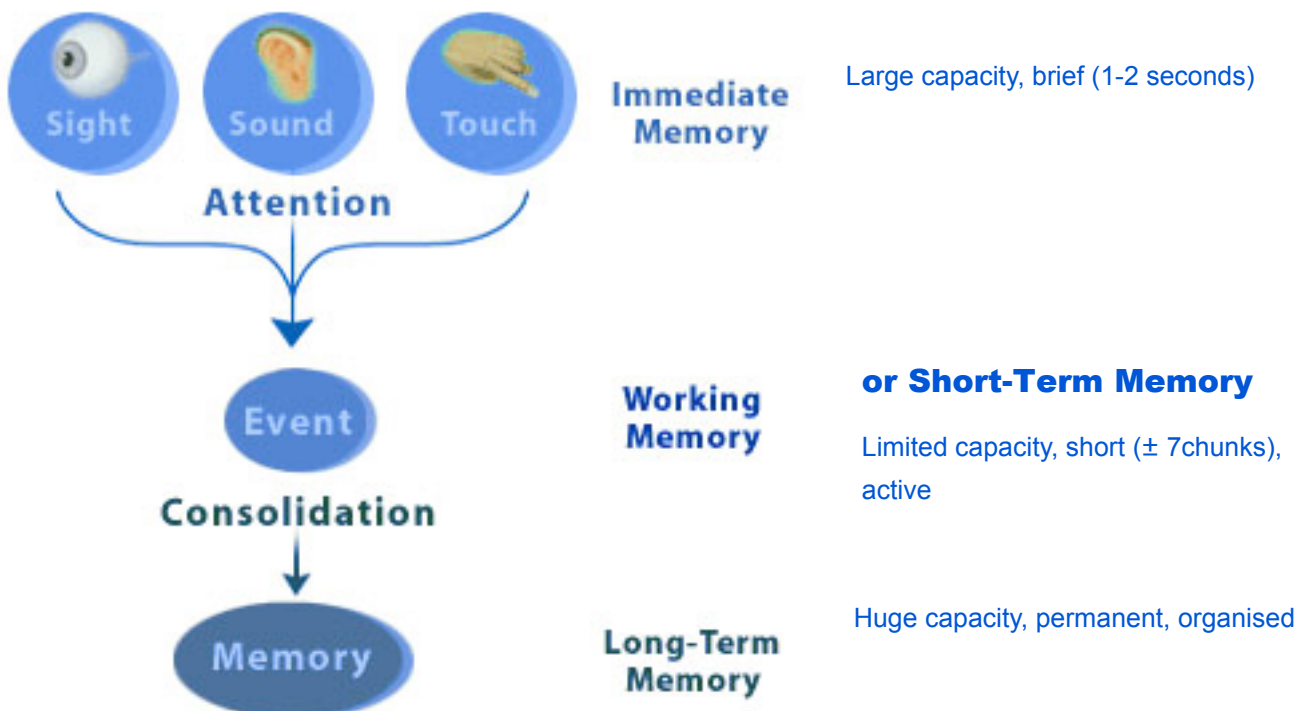
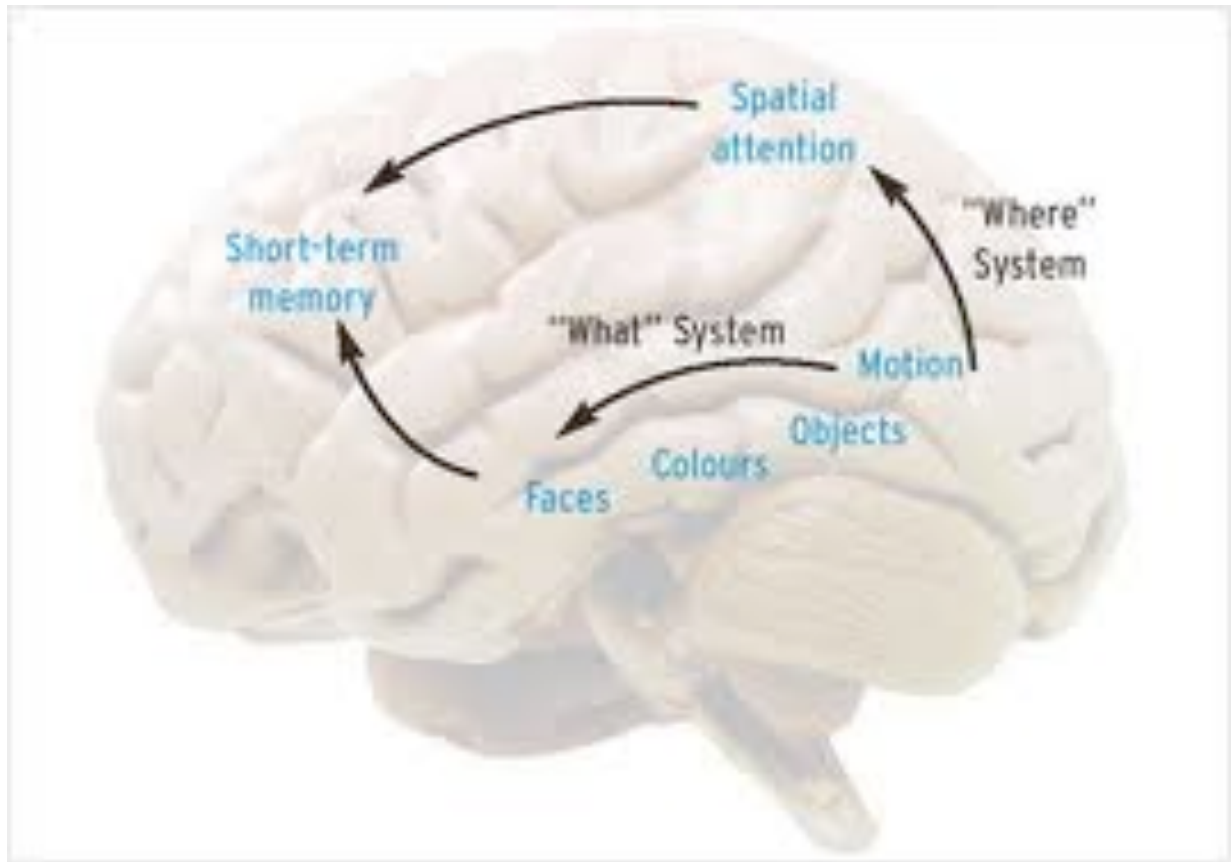
Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the expert advice and guidance of Mr. David Greeshaw (Registered Psychologist), which has assisted in the preparation of this study booklet.

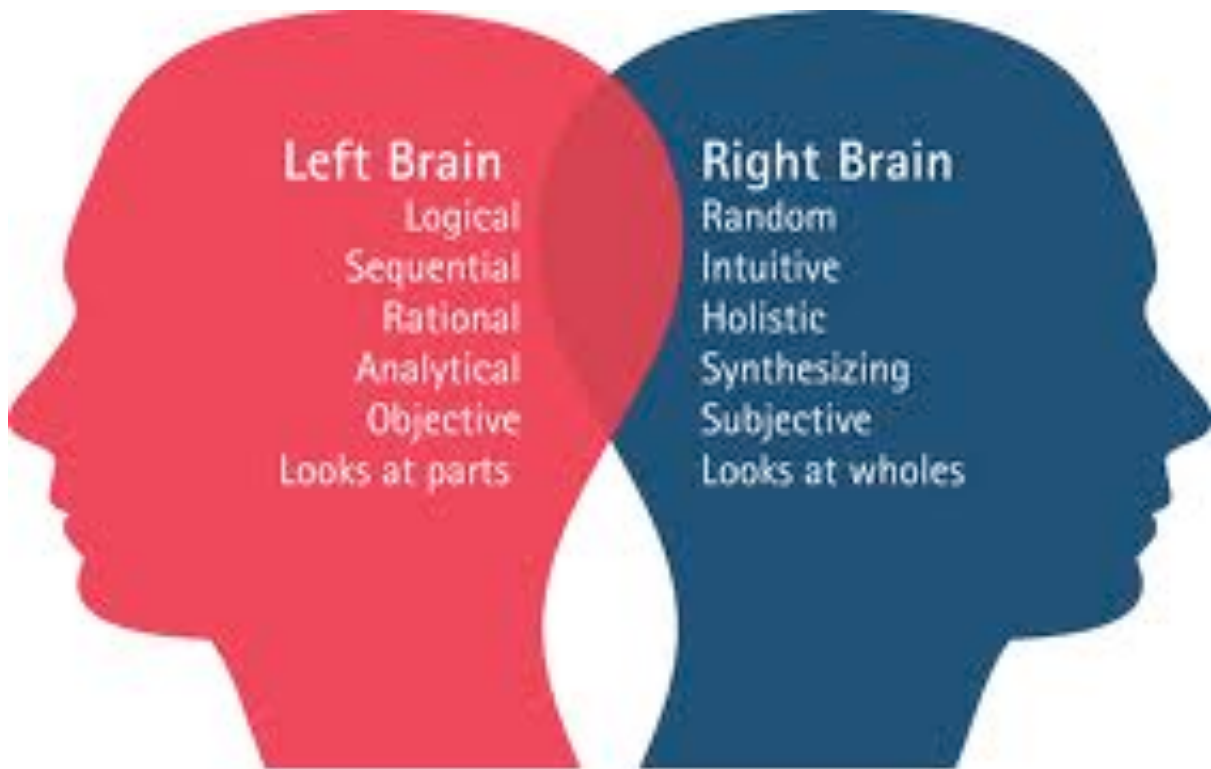
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Human Memory Systems



A Comparison of Left and Right Hemisphere Characteristics



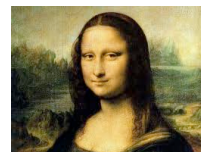
Left Hemisphere

Verbal
Digital
Linear
Rational
Temporal
Controls right side of body
Scientific
Spoken language
Written language



Right Hemisphere

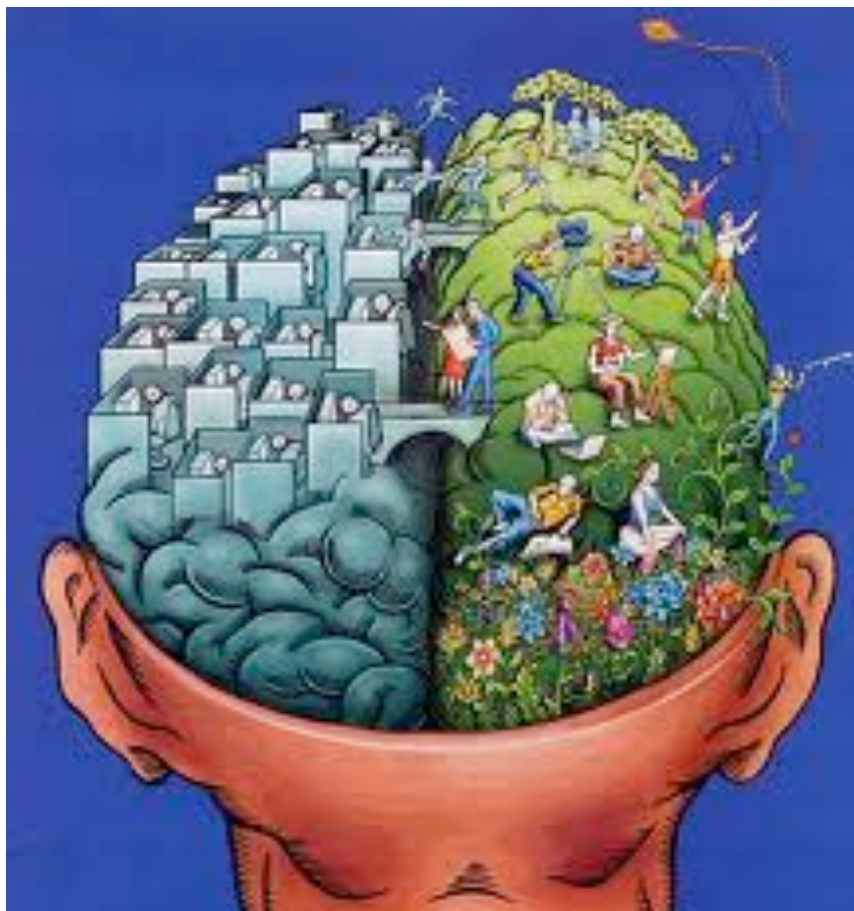
Non-verbal
Spatial
Creative
Non-rational
Non-temporal
Controls left side of body
Artistic/Musical
Imagination
Insight/3D forms



Types of Cognitive Processing

Brief Description

Holistic	Processing information from whole to part; sees the big picture first, not the details.
Random	Processing information without priority, jumps from one task to another.
Concrete	Processes things that can be seen, or touched - real objects.
Intuitive	Processes information based on whether or not it feels right, knows answer but not sure how it was derived.
Nonverbal	Processes thought as illustrations.
Fantasy-Oriented	Processes information with creativity; less focus on rules and regulations



Discover Your Brain Dominance: Are you Left-Mode or Right-Mode Dominant? (WEBSITE: <http://www.web-us.com/brain/braindominance.htm>)

1. Which is more true of you?

- a. I am tense about getting things right.
- b. I am relaxed and let things happen.

2. Do you often feel sad or down in the dumps?

- a. No.
- b. Yes.

3. Which do you enjoy more about music?

- a. The beat.
- b. The melody.

4. Which way of learning do you like best?

- a. Books and lectures.
- b. Workshops and field trips.

5. Which of these two subjects do you like more?

- a. Math.
- b. Art.

6. Which of these two games do you prefer?

- a. Scrabble.
- b. Draughts.

7. How do you usually buy something?

- a. I think about its value and how I will use it.
- b. I just buy it.

8. When you buy something, do you make sure to get the correct change back?

- a. Yes, I count it.
- b. No.

9. How do you figure things out?

- a. One piece at a time, then put it all together.
- b. The answer comes to me all at once.

10. Which of these two types of puzzles do you prefer?

- a. Crossword puzzle.
- b. Jigsaw puzzle.

11. How often do you have a hunch?

- a. Never or almost never.
- b. Often.

12. Which would you rather do?

- a. Read.
- b. Watch TV.

13. How are you at putting your feelings into words?

- a. Very good.
- b. It is hard for me.

14. If you practise an instrument or sport, how do you do it?

- a. The same day every day, for the same length.
- b. When I feel like it and have the time.

15. You're riding your bike to a friend's house.

You've never been there before. Do you:

- a. Ask for directions, then write down street names.
- b. Ask for directions, then look up a map.

16. Which of these types of fabrics do you prefer?

- a. Fabrics without much texture (cotton, denim).
- b. Fabrics with lots of texture (corduroy, velvet).

17. Are you good at remembering faces?

- a. No.
- b. Yes.

18. Are you good at remembering names?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

19. How do you feel about psychic things - that there is such a thing as ESP for example?

- a. They are foolish and nonscientific.
- b. Science can't explain everything.

20. Are you a better athlete than a student?

- a. No.
- b. Yes.

As are left-brained responses and Bs are right-brained responses.

- 17 or more As or Bs means you have a strong preference for that side of your brain.
- 15 As or Bs means you have some preference for that side of your brain.
- 10 or 11 of each means you use both sides of your brain equally.

WHAT IS YOUR STRENGTH?

As = _____

Bs = _____

Discover Your Learning Style: Are you a Visual, Auditory or Kinesthetic Learner?

1. Which way would you rather learn how a computer works?

- a. Watching a movie about it.
- b. Listening to someone explain it.
- c. Taking it apart and trying to figure it out yourself

2. Which would you prefer to read for fun?

- a. A travel book with lots of picture in it.
- b. A mystery book with a lot of conversation in it.
- c. A book where you answer questions and do puzzles.

3. When you aren't sure how to spell a word, do you:

- a. Write it out to see if it looks right.
- b. Sound it out.
- c. Write it out to sense if it feels right.

4. If you were at a party, what would you be most likely to remember the next day?

- a. The faces of the people there, but not the names.
- b. The names, but not the faces.
- c. The things you did and said while you were there.

5. How would you rather study for a test?

- a. Read notes, read headings, look at diagrams.
- b. Have someone ask you questions verbally.
- c. Write things out on cards and make models.

6. When you see the word D-O-G what do you do first?

- a. Think of a picture of a particular dog.
- b. Say the word "dog" to yourself silently.
- c. Sense the feeling of being with a dog.

7. What do you find most distracting when you are trying to concentrate?

- a. Visual distractions.
- b. Noises.
- c. Other sensations like hunger, tight shoes or worry.

8. How do you prefer to solve problems?

- a. Make a list, organise steps, tick them off when done.
- b. Make a few phone calls, talk to friends or experts.
- c. Make a model of the problem or walk through all the steps in your mind.

9. Which are you most likely to do while standing in a long line at the movies?

- a. Look at the posters advertising other movies.
- b. Talk to the person next to you.
- c. Tap your foot or move around in some way.

10. You have just entered a museum. What will you do first?

- a. Look around and find a map showing locations.
- b. Talk to a museum guide and ask about displays.
- c. Go to the first display that looks interesting.

11. When you are angry, what are you most likely to do?

- a. Scowl.
- b. Shout or "blow off"
- c. Stomp off or slam doors.

12. When you are happy, what do you most often do?

- a. Grin
- b. Shout with joy.
- c. Jump for joy.

13. Which would you rather go to?

- a. An art class.
- b. A music class.
- c. An exercise class.

14. Which of these do you do when you listen to music?

- a. Daydream..
- b. Hum along.
- c. Move to the music, tap your foot etc.

15. How would you rather tell a story?

- a. Write it.
- b. Tell it out loud.
- c. Act it out.

16. Which kind of restaurant would you rather not go to

- a. One with lights too bright.
- b. One with music too loud.
- c. One with uncomfortable chairs.

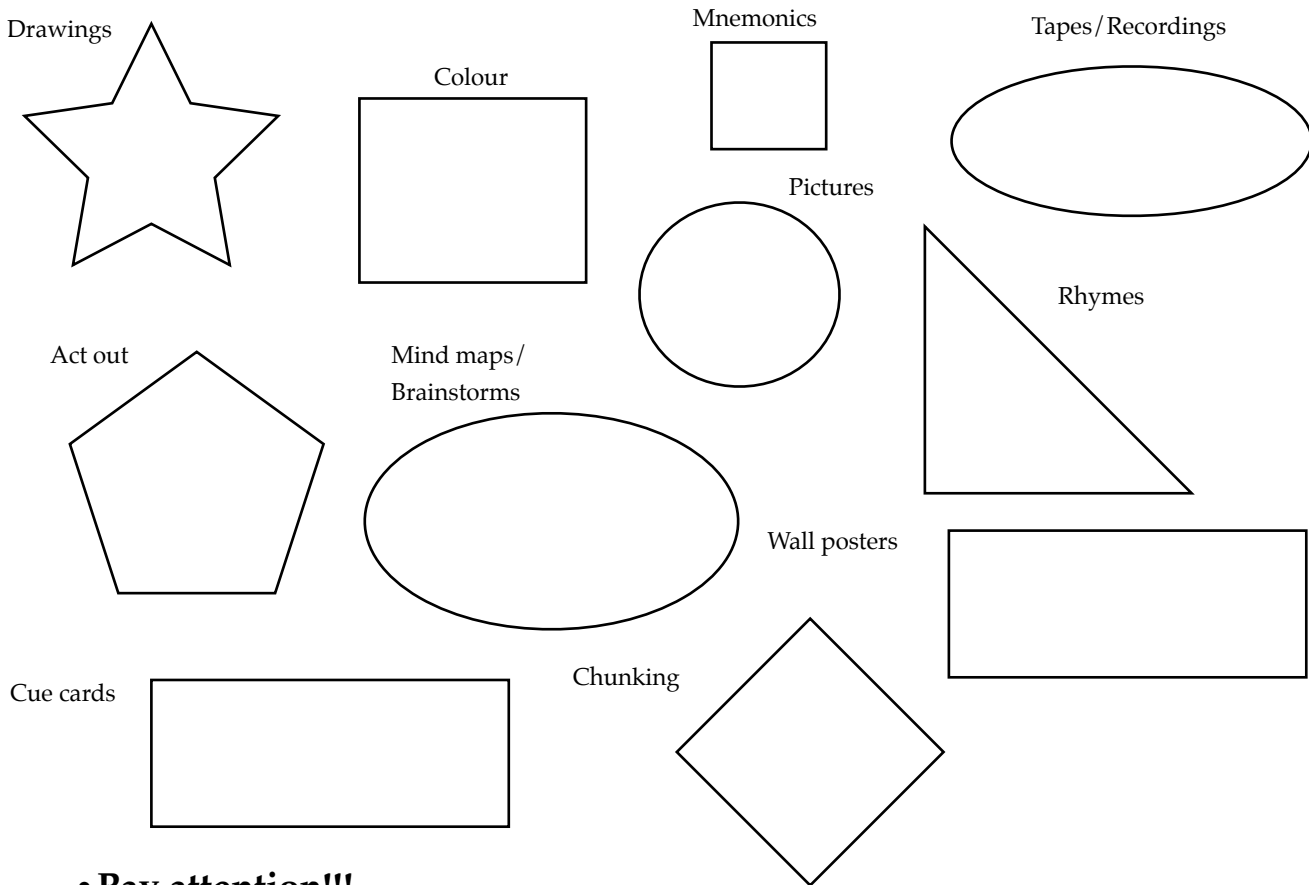
As _____ Bs _____ Cs _____

- If you scored mostly As, you may have a visual learning style. You learn best by seeing and looking.
- If you scored mostly Bs, you may have an auditory learning style. You learn best by hearing and listening.
- If you scored mostly Cs, you may have a kinesthetic learning style. You learn best by touching and doing.
- If you circled two letters about the same number of times, you may depend on both of those styles of learning.

MY BEST STYLE OF LEARNING APPEARS TO BE _____

OPTIMISING YOUR MEMORY

• Commit things to memory in different ways



• Pay attention!!!

We often fail to remember because we never really concentrated on the information in the first place.

• Take your Time

It is not possible to remember large amounts of work in a short time. It is much better to work on things over a longer period of time and space them out. This allows you to take it easy on yourself. Spreading things out also lessens PANIC... Panic does not enhance memory or recall.

• Take Time Out

Use breaks for rest and recreation. Timetable other LIFE activities. Sleep has been found to be very useful after learning and it is instrumental in consolidating previously studied information and how well it is transferred to LONG-TERM MEMORY.

• Overlearn

Studying information, even after you think you know it, is one of the best ways to remember.

MIND MAPPING

Mind maps are tools which help you think and learn. This sheet describes how to do a mind map and explains what areas of study mind maps have been found to be useful.



ADVANCED METHODS AND USES

Arrows

These can be used to show how concepts which appear on different parts of a pattern are connected. The arrow can be single or multi-headed and can show backward and forward directions.



Codes

Asterisks, exclamation marks, crosses and question marks as well as many other indicators can be used next to words to show connections or other 'dimensions'.



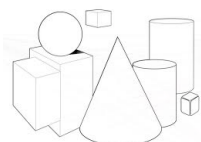
Geometrical shapes

Squares, oblongs, circles, ellipses etc. can be used to mark areas or words which are similar in nature - e.g. triangles might be used to show areas of possible solution in a problem-solving pattern. Geometrical shapes can also be used to show order of importance. Some people, for example, prefer to use a square always for their main centre, oblongs for the ideas near the centre, triangles for ideas of next importance and so on.



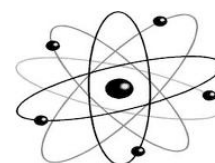
Artistic three dimension

Each of the geometrical shapes mentioned, and many others, can be given perspective. E.g. making a square into a cube. The ideas printed in these shapes will thus 'stand off' the page.



Creativity images

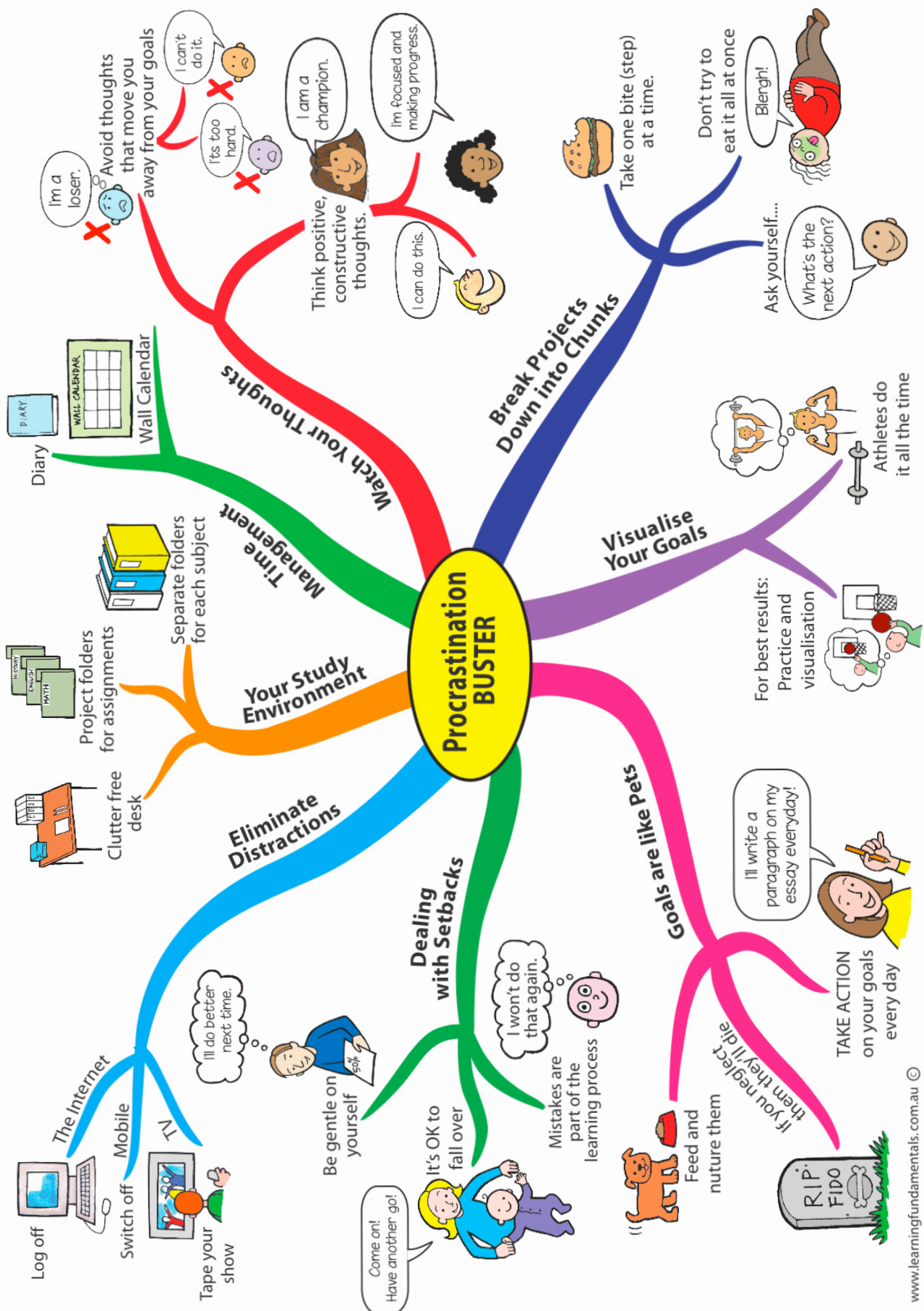
Creativity can be combined with the use of dimension by making aspects of the pattern fit the topic. One man, for example, when doing a pattern on atomic physics, used the nucleus of an atom and the electrons that surrounded it, as the centre for his pattern.



Colour

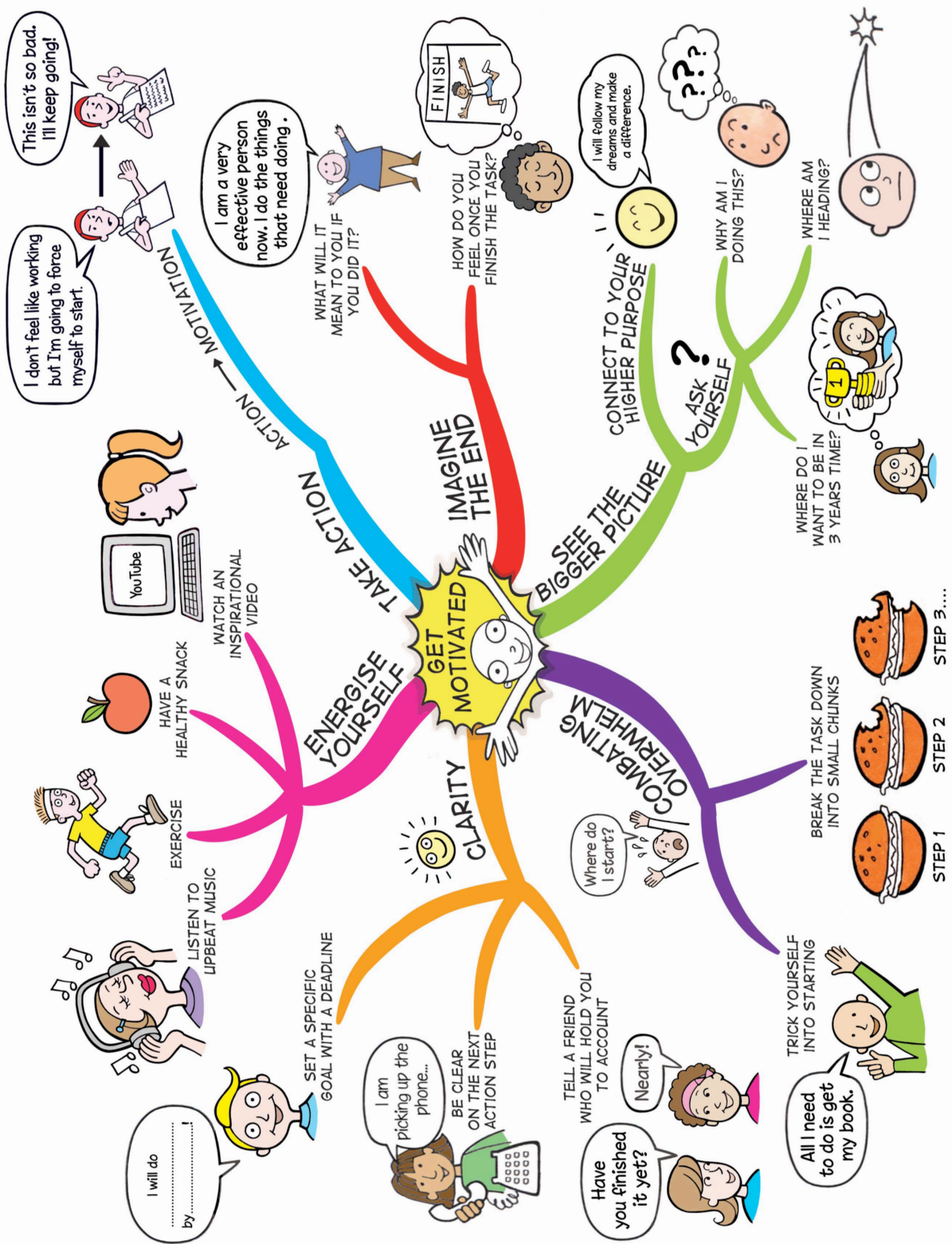
Colour is particularly useful as a memory and creative aid. It can be used, like arrows, to show how concepts which appear on different parts of the pattern are connected. It can also be used to mark off the boundaries between major areas of a pattern.





www.learningfundamentals.com.au ©

Genovese, J. (n.d.). Procrastination Buster Mind Map. In *Learning Fundamentals*. Retrieved May 30, 2011, from <http://learningfundamentals.com.au/>



Genovese, J. (n.d.). Get Motivated Mind Map. In *Learning Fundamentals*. Retrieved May 30, 2011, from <http://learningfundamentals.com.au/>

STUDY SKILLS STRATEGIES

Note-Taking Strategies: In Class

Do Not Write Down Everything

Attempting to take down every bit of information is futile and of course no one can write that fast. In addition, you will not be able to give full attention to the actual content of the lesson. Notes should be a summary.

Listen/look for Keywords

For example: “the important point is”, “in summary”, “in conclusion”, “the take-home message is”, “therefore”. These are words that signify importance.

Listen for Main Points and Topics

Watch for Signals and Clues From the Teacher

Teachers will have developed a pattern to their lesson delivery that you can utilise in making notes (i.e. notes written on board, lists that indicate a certain number of facts, formal definitions). Verbal clues may also help, as some teacher will slow down or raise their voice or adopt a different tone when they are saying something important.

Write Down Examples

Examples will help cement your understanding of the topics/concepts.

Write It In Your Own Words

This will enable you to understand the information later on when you re-read it.

Note-Taking Strategies: Research

Know What You Need to Record

Focus your approach on the topic before you start detailed research. You will then be able to read with a purpose in mind and you will be able to sort out relevant ideas. Create a preliminary list of topics and keywords that you would expect to find in your reading. These will guide your attention and help you in knowing what to look for in your research reading.

Do Not Write Too Much

Invest your time in understanding the research information and integrating it into your own thinking and understanding. Your notes should only contain ideas that are relevant to your focus on the topic/question and mostly summarise rather than quote verbatim.

Compress Ideas Into Your Own Words

Copy out exact words only when the ideas are memorably phrased or expressed, when you might use them as actual quotes in your essay/report. Otherwise, compress ideas in your own words - choose the most important ideas and write them down as headings, then fill in with a few sub-points or sub-headings that explain or exemplify.

Use Post-It Notes to Flag Important Points

Write Down References

This will be useful in case you require to quote them or need further information. It is very important to document your references correctly in a bibliography or reference list, in order to prove your research efforts and credit the appropriate sources you used to support your essay/assignment.

Effective Reading Strategies

Build active learning activities into each reading session. Merely exposing yourself to material is not an effective learning activity. You need to make sure you are constantly asking yourself “Why am I reading this?”.

Preview What You Are About to Read

Overview the book/text to work out which sections require more detailed reading for your purpose. You can do this by looking over chapter titles and sub-headings. This will probably be most useful when you are doing assignments for which there is no set text.

Read and Mark

As you are reading make sure you are underlining, highlighting, numbering or in some way drawing attention to the sections of text that are important. Points worth marking will be things like definitions, important examples, numbered points, major headings, and the main ideas or summaries of chapters.

Make Notes of What You Have Read

Keep some notes as you read to remind yourself of the content and key ideas, and detail where the information came from.

What to Look for When Reading

Look for definitions (important to be familiar with key terms), examples, lists (look for words like “first of all”, “secondly”, “in addition”, etc), signal words that indicate an important point follows (e.g., “above all”, “a key feature”, “most effective”), and main ideas that are usually expressed in the first sentence of a paragraph.

Elliott, J. (2001). Practical Study Skills for Secondary School Students: Treading Water while the Sharks are Circling. Curtin University of Technology.

DAILY REVIEW

- Allocate 10 minutes to the 'DAILY REVIEW' process for each subject that you want to focus on.
- Generate a 'STUDY TIMETABLE' that finds the time necessary to complete the 'DAILY REVIEW'.
- Write as much as you can remember about what you did in class for a particular subject. With practise you can become brief and to the point. This is important.
- When you have written what you remember, refer to your notes for that day for the particular subject, searching for things that you have forgotten.
- Use a different coloured pen to record these forgotten points at the end of your remembered notes.
- Continue the same process for the rest of your 'DAILY REVIEW' subjects.
- At the end of the week, view the past week's work by attempting to remember what you have written for the week in that subject.
- Write down as much as you can remember from your daily notes.
- Return to your 'DAILY REVIEW' notes to now check what you may have forgotten from them. Record them in a different colour.
- Add Brain-mode and Learning Style strength to your notes. Make charts, songs, drawings, colour-coded post it notes with keyword and tape them on your wall.
- Continue this pattern until the end of Term approaches or a forthcoming exam looms.
- Anything that continues to show up as a forgotten 'thing' can be discussed with a teacher or you may want to try to remember it in another way.
- Play around with this basic process. Adapt, change, invent, ponder...

BEAT PROCRASTINATION

Some techniques for helping you put in the effort, persist and finish work you do not feel like doing.

The *KNOCK-OUT* technique

- ☐ The harder and more boring the task, the better it is to do it immediately.

The *WORST FIRST* approach

- ☐ Identify the most difficult part of a task and do it first.

The *REMEMBERING-FORGETTING* technique

- ☐ Whenever you remember what you forgot to do, a task you've been putting off, do it, at least some of it immediately.

The *BITS AND PIECES* technique

- ☐ Do any amount of the task or project whenever you want. Eventually the whole task will be complete.

The *SALAMI* technique

- ☐ List all the different things you have to do to complete the assignment or project. Work on one thing at a time until you have completed all of them.

The *FIVE-MINUTE* plan

- ☐ Take something you have been putting off doing and work on it for 5 minutes. You will find that you end up doing more than 5 minutes once you have started.

The *SWITCHING* technique

- ☐ Use the momentum you gain from working on one activity you enjoy to switch over to another less attractive activity you have been putting off.

The *PEAK PERFORMANCE* technique

- ☐ Do the project or assignment you have been putting off at a time when you are most rested or most energised.

PLAN and ORGANISE YOUR STUDY ENVIRONMENT

DESK

- ☐ A regular place to work. For your use only. Free from distractions.

CHAIR

- ☐ Comfortable, but not too comfortable that would make you drowsy.

LIGHTING

- ☐ Positioned to alleviate eye strain from shadows. Tiredness can be a great excuse to stop.

MATERIALS

- ☐ A separate set of everything you need to study. This stays in the same place. Not to be used by other family members.

REWARD

- ☐ Take snacks and drinks to study with you. Pleasant experiences become associated with study over time, if practiced consistently. Study first then something you like to do.

DISTRACTIONS

- ☐ TV and radio distract. The study area needs to be a quiet place. Your family needs to respect this. Timetable study after your interests where possible.

HABIT

- ☐ Daily Review gets you into a habit. Play around with study timetables for a while until you get a workable one. Be assertive in declining offers from peers, family and yourself. Study becomes easier with time and self-motivation.

FAMILY

- ☐ Negotiate a study timetable with family. Display a copy of your study timetable around the house.

FITTING STUDY AROUND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNES- DAY	THURS- DAY	FRIDAY	SATUR- DAY	SUNDAY
6-7am							
7-8am							
8-9am							
9-10am							
11-12pm							
12-1pm							
1-2pm							
2-3pm							
3-4pm							
4-5pm							
5-6pm							
6-7pm							
7-8pm							
8-9pm							
9-10pm							
10-11pm							

The Facebook Effect: How to Stay Focused for Exams

May 23rd, 2011 by **Jane**

It's crunch time. Exams are quickly approaching (less than 2 weeks away) for many students.

If you're like most students you may have noticed that the amount of time you've been spending on Facebook, YouTube or Twitter has significantly increased over the past few weeks or days.

If this is the case, don't feel bad. It's completely normal. But it's still a big problem and the sooner you control distractions in your environment, the better.

Will power and self discipline are great ideas in theory, but at the end of the day after a long day at school, you most likely feel tired and your will power reserves are running low or close to nil. For this reason, it's quite challenging for many students to resist the temptation to log onto Facebook. The stress and discomfort of thinking about exams also makes many students want to seek relief. The easy way to get relief is to log onto Facebook and switch off.

With all that in mind, an intervention is needed. There are a number of applications that you can download that will restrict your access to the internet and help you focus. Below are two programmes that I have tested and regularly use to help me stay focused on my work.

Self Control [<http://visitsteve.com/made/selfcontrol/>]

Self Control is an ideal programme to use if you still need to use the internet for work but don't want to be able to access certain addictive websites.

It contains a "blacklist" in which you type in the websites you want to be locked out from. When you want to activate the programme, you simply click start and select how long you want to be locked out for. It's free to download but unfortunately it's only available to Mac users with OS X operating systems.

Freedom [<http://macfreedom.com/>]

If the internet is too distracting for you and you don't need it to complete your work (e.g. you need to read a book or practice solving some equations) then skip Self Control and use Freedom. This nifty little application will set you back \$10US, but it allows you to lock yourself out of the web for up to 8 hours at a time.

If you're unsure about spending \$10US at this stage, there is a free trial version available. The good news is this application is available for Mac and Windows computers.

A student asked me with a cheeky smile –

"But what if I activate the programme and then just restart my computer when I want to go back onto Facebook?"

The creators of these applications aren't stupid and they designed both Self Control and Freedom in such a way that deleting the application or restarting your computer won't make any difference. You have to wait for the time to run out.

So even if you have poor self control, there is help out there. The key is to be willing to try out these programmes. It may mean that initially you have to force yourself to activate the programme and you may feel uncomfortable. But after some time the discomfort will subside and you will be amazed by how much study you'll be able to get through in a short space of time.

Genovese, J. (May 2011). The Facebook effect: How to stay focused for exams. In *Learning Fundamentals*. Retrieved May 30, 2011, from <http://learningfundamentals.com.au/>

THE SUPPORTING ROLE OF PARENTS

STAGE 1 - RAISING THE ISSUE

"Can we organise a time to have a chat about study?"

"I would really like to help you get started."

Discuss study in general. Recognise that it is a difficult thing to start and maintain. Offer your support in the practicalities and the encouragement.

☒ **Use natural rewards such as:**

"I really liked the way that you listened to what I had to say about study". "I like it when we talk about things."

☒ **Use tangible rewards such as:**

A favourite meal, extra pocket money, a movie, ...

STAGE 2 - NEGOTIATION AND PLANNING

Negotiate times, days, how much time will be spent to start with, how much time given later, giving up some previous activity (TV, computer, mobile) and what you are prepared to offer to help out.

☒ **Use natural rewards such as:**

"I am really pleased how things are going." "I am looking forward to helping out."

☒ **Use tangible rewards to catch them out.**

STAGE 3 - IMPLEMENTATION

Set things up together. Set a day to start, tell others around the house when things are going to start, share what was done during the study session.

☒ **Use natural rewards such as:**

"You have made a great start." "It's great to see you doing this work." "You must be pleased with your efforts."

☒ **Use tangible rewards to catch them out.**

STAGE 4 - MAINTENANCE

Continue to support with the practicalities (meals, resources, quiet). Understand that as the exam nears things can become moody/teary/aggressive.

Stay calm and supportive. Put exams into perspective. Check for pitfalls, obstacles.

Liaise with teachers.

Help with study techniques.

USEFUL WEBSITES

Study Guides and Strategies (<http://www.studygs.net/>)

This website has useful strategies and online modules to help you in the areas of: learning to learn, learning with others, effective study habits, classroom learning, on-line learning, motivating yourself, general test preparation, concentration, memorisation, reading strategically, time management, project management, problem solving, seven stages of writing assignments, writing process, deadlines, writing research papers, taking math tests, following the scientific method. Highly recommended.

Learning Fundamentals (<http://learningfundamentals.com.au>)

Learning Fundamentals is an organisation that assists students with learning techniques in an enjoyable and interactive manner. They have been delivering workshops since 2004 and have worked with thousands of students across Western Australia.

NSW High School Certificate Online (<http://hsc.csu.edu.au/study/>)

The website focuses on skills and techniques for supporting students that are preparing for their WACE exams (NB: this is a NSW website and some of the terminology or processes may not apply to WA students).

Time Management (<http://www.timemanagementadvantage.com/>)

This website contains articles about how to best manage your time when studying for exams and planning work on your assignments.

How to Study (<http://www.cse.buffalo.edu/~rapaport/howtostudy.html>)

This website is put together by the Departments of Computer Science & Engineering, Philosophy and Centre for Cognitive Science from State University of New York (Buffalo). It has specific tips and hints on how to manage your time, take notes, read texts actively, prepare for exams and write essays.

Harvard Guide to Happiness

(<http://www.cse.buffalo.edu/~rapaport/harvard.html>)

Insightful article about ways to enhance your learning and achieve happiness in your school life.

[illegible]

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.